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THE ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

VOL. LXII.

BOSTON, JULY AND AUGUST, 1900.

No. 7.

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,
PUBLISHERS,
NO. 3 SOMERSET STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

MONTHLY, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR.

The Root of the Trouble in China.

We have been asked how we would have settled the present trouble in China without war. That is as if one were to ask how we would prevent a fire when the flames were already bursting from all the windows. The settlement of the trouble by us without war would have required, first of all, that it be turned over to us for settlement, or that the powers involved in it would agree conscientiously to follow, in their efforts at adjustment, the principles and methods which we might suggest. The utter impossibility of either of these contingencies in the case of the trouble with China shows the thoughtlessness of the question.

The time to have begun the pacific settlement of the difficulty was many years ago. Given certain conditions, practices and beliefs, such as have for a long time existed in the relations of the other countries to China, and war or something like it was inevitable. No advocate of peace has ever been simple enough to imagine that war can be avoided when every condition leading to good understanding and peace has been neglected or trampled under foot.

Thoughtful men who study international affairs philosophically have long foreseen conflict in the far east. It has come more suddenly, more appallingly, than was expected, and in a different way, but it has not come as a surprise. The powers, in their greedy aggressiveness, were expected to fall afoul of one another over the Chinese territory. Just as we were holding our breath over the impending conflict between Russia and Japan, lo! China herself, or a powerful section of her people, rises up in fury, defies the world, and begins the expulsion and massacre of all foreigners. The direfulness of the situation becomes the more heartrending when one considers that it might all have been avoided, that the powers which are now in such sore distress, and crying out in grief and anger against heathen barbarity and cruelty, have themselves chiefly to thank for the calamity.

We are not disposed to forget or to minimize Chinese barbarity, exclusiveness and hatred of foreigners. But these in themselves are inadequate to account for the situation. They have played their part, but without long-continued and excessive provocation they would have resulted in no such extensive and passionate uprising as that now prevailing. Unprovoked, treated with justice and fairness, there is abundant reason to believe that the Chinese would have responded with kindness and confidence about as readily as any other people. Many of them, in spite of the way in which their country has been treated, have large sympathy with the western world and deprecate the present uprising as most unfortunate for China as well as the other countries involved. There are Chinamen scattered throughout all lands, and they appreciate the blessings and advantages which they see. Within the empire the response to Christianity has not been hopelessly slow. The present uprising is not primarily an uprising against Christianity, strongly as the people are attached to their own ancient religion. There is ground to believe that if Christianity had been permitted to enter the empire in a purely Christian way, it would have received no greater, possibly less, persecution than in other un-Christianized countries.

The essential feature of the present uprising is its *anti-foreign* character. It is not a riot in the ordinary sense of the term, though riotous elements have entered powerfully into it. It is directed against the whole body of foreigners, not against Christians alone, not against the legations alone, not against persons of any nation alone. Every foreigner is considered a "foreign devil." The native Christians are massacred, not so much because they are Christians, as because they are in apparent league with the foreigners against China. The reform movement under the young emperor, which for a brief moment promised such prodigious transformation, was hated and choked because it was considered a gigantic scheme by which the foreign powers were swiftly to gain control and sweep away the last vestige of native influence and native supremacy.

Why should the Chinese hate all foreigners and call them by such a diabolical name? The question might with propriety be put the other way: Why

should they not hate them? Foreign governments and peoples have for fifty years treated China with both contempt and highhandedness. The opium war, the forcing of the opium traffic upon them, and the consequent corruption and enslavement of multitudes of the people, was a high crime, moral and political, which the Chinese have never forgotten. One nation after another has forced a "concession" from the government, until the people saw port after port slipping away and the foreigners extending their "spheres of influence" all up and down the coast from Corea to the gulf of Tong-King. Port Arthur, Wei-Hai-Wei, Kiao-Chou, Hong-Kong, Tong-King,—one can imagine the feelings with which intelligent Chinamen and ignorant Chinamen saw these ports in the hands of Russia, Great Britain, Germany and France, and the warships of these powers hovering always along the coast ready to seize something more. Missionaries were mobbed; their home governments seized territory in retaliation. Merchants followed the missionaries, and whenever trouble occurred, often by reason of their own barefaced unscrupulousness, armed force was called in and more "concessions" were secured. The missionaries themselves were sometimes supporters of these aggressions. Hence arose the saying: First the missionary, then the consul, then the general. Everything wore to the Chinese the aspect of a deep laid scheme of conquest. Meantime, in other countries, the Chinese were looked down upon with contempt, mobbed, robbed, massacred. A whole class of them has been excluded by law from our own country, and those who come have often been subjected to humiliating indignities and hardships. No Chinaman, however noble and intelligent, is permitted to become an American citizen. The impending war between Russia and Japan meant to the Chinese further aggressions upon their territory by the victorious party, whichever it might be.

There is something amazing in the selfish coolness with which all foreign peoples lay the blame of the present uprising wholly upon the Chinese. The fact is, the nations are reaping just as they have been sowing. The wonder is that the Chinese bore as long as they did the inroads on their coast and the threats of taking away and dividing up their country. But for their accumulated dread and hatred of foreigners, the Boxer movement would have been comparatively insignificant, if ever heard of in public affairs.

Going to the root of the matter, therefore, the foreign nations have themselves to blame for the terrible calamity which has befallen, and the blood of the innocent men and women who have been outraged and slaughtered rests in no small measure upon their heads. If they would only take home to themselves the lesson and hereafter act toward China according to the simple dictates of justice and fairness, no recurrence of the present trouble need be

feared. The simple Christian course to take would be the abandonment of the "concessions" which have been wrung from the Chinese government, the assurance that the integrity of the empire would not be interfered with, and the concession to well-behaved Chinamen in other countries of the same rights and immunities as are granted to the citizens of other nations. If these things were done, the report thereof would run quickly through the whole great empire, there would be no difficulty about the open door which China herself is anxious to maintain, about the freedom of Christianity and trade, and the safety of life and property hereafter. If the opposite course is taken, as seems too probable, and further "concessions" insisted upon, blood exacted for blood to the last drop, contempt heaped upon the Chinaman as heretofore, it takes no extraordinary vision to foresee again in the near future a repetition of the frightful scenes recently enacted, by which all our hearts have been so tortured.

Editorial Notes.

Paying the Penalty. The latest statistics of the British losses in South Africa show that England is paying very heavily for her conduct in bringing on the Boer war. The list of killed, wounded, captured, died of disease and disabled by sickness now reaches more than forty-eight thousand. By the time this paper reaches our readers, the number will probably be beyond fifty thousand. This equals the entire number of men of military age which the Transvaal at the opening of the war was able to put into the field. Krüger's prophecy of destroying enough of the British to stagger humanity is not far from fulfilment. Nor is the deadly work yet over. The capture of Pretoria did not end the war. The Boers show practically no change of disposition. They still control about three-fourths of the Transvaal. Their armies have been divided up into small bands, which continually hang on the outskirts of Roberts's armies, now and then inflicting heavy blows, as in the case of the disaster to the Scots Greys on the 11th of July. It requires about one-half of the large British force to guard the communications with Cape Town and Durban. It is nine months and more since the war began, and its harvest of death and ruin seems likely to go on for a good while yet. The war spirit is the most unyielding, as well as the most inhuman and irrational, with which man is ever possessed. To it nothing on earth or in heaven is sacred.

Fourth of July.

A battle in which fifteen hundred men are killed and wounded awakens horror. But from statistics carefully gathered it appears that the recent Fourth of July cost the nation